The Sub-Group recommended progressive corporatisation of Airport Authority of India (AAI), commencing with corporatisation of the Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore airports in the first phase. Foreign equity participation upto 100% is to be permitted in the case of all these airports. Action is also to be initiated for setting up a regulatory framework for ensuring a level playing field for all the players.

(iii) *Sub-Group on Integrated Transport Policy*

Member, Planning Commission, headed this Sub-Group. The other Members of this sub-group included Principal Adviser (Transport), Planning Commission and IDFC. This Sub-Group was a direct offshoot of the announcement made by the PM in his address on the occasion of the International Seminar on Transport Policy on enlarging the mandate of the Task Force to formulate an integrated National Transport Policy to strengthen the transport infrastructure.

A draft report on the Integrated Transport Policy was finalised by Planning Commission in consultation with the Secretaries of the concerned Ministries and IDFC. This was subsequently put on the INTERNET and suggestions received appropriately incorporated. The modified draft report has been circulated again and is expected to be discussed by the Task Force shortly.

(iv) *Sub-Group on Implementation of NHDP*

The members of this Sub-Group were National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and Ministry of Finance. Their brief was to present the implementation of the Golden Quadrangle and explore the use of Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) in order to enhance the implementation of the NHDP.

This Sub-Group made a presentation to the Task Force on the schedule of implementing the Golden Quadrangle part of NHDP, the use of dedicated road fund and the use of SPVs to enhance the involvement of the private sector, following which they were asked to explore the option of shadow tolling and annuity payments in greater detail.

(v) *Sub-Group on Expressways*

This Sub-Group is headed by Secretary, Surface Transport and is to have representatives from Planning Commission, NHAI, M/o Finance. This sub-group has been constituted for identification of expressways, the institutional set up for the implementation of expressways and for analysis of data regarding the projected requirement of expressways.

This Sub-Group is expected to submit its report to the Task Force shortly.

Earthquake in Northern India

*348. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major earthquake rocked northern parts of the country on 28-29 March, 1999, midnight;

(b) if so, the details of persons dead or injured and properties damaged as a result thereof in northern India, location-wise;

(c) the details of compensation paid by the concerned State Government and Union Government to the affected persons/families; and

(d) the details of assistance rendered by the Union Government to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), an earthquake of magnitude 6.8 on the Richter scale occurred at 0035 hours on 29th March, 1999 and another earthquake

of magnitude 5.0 on the Richter scale occurred at 0232 hours on 31st March, 1999 in the hilly areas of Uttar Pradesh. Tremors were also experienced on 7th April, 1999.

(b) As per available information, the earthquake reportedly affected a population of 4.92 lakhs of 3174 villages in 6 districts in Uttar Pradesh and caused damage to more that 66000 houses, besides loss of 105 human lives and injury to about 400 persons.

(c) and (d) As per available information, the State Government has so far distributed assistance of Rs. 539.92 lakhs towards ex-gratia to the next of kin of the deceased, gratuitous relief to the injured, ex-gratia for loss of cattle, assistance for damaged houses, etc.

The State Government is required to undertake relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of such natural Calamities from the allocation under the calamity Relief Fund (CRF). The entire Central share of CRF to the State for 1998-99 and the 1st quarterly instalment of Central share of CRF for 1999-2000 has been released. The Army, Air Force and Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) are assisting the State machinery in relief operation and the Border Roads Organisation is assisting in clearance of roads blocked to traffic. In addition to CRF, assistance is provided to the States from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) for calamities of rare severity. No Memorandum has so far been received from the State Government, seeking assistance from the NFCR in this regard.

Deaths Due to Heat Wave

*349. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI:
SHRI ANANTA SETHI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the death of people due to increasing heat wave in Orissa;

(b) if so, the steps taken to help the people who are affected by heat wave;

(c) whether heat wave is proposed to be included in the National Relief Code; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) According to the State Government, 12 deaths have occurred during the current financial year upto (10.4.99) due to sun-stroke.

(b) Advance action has reportedly been taken by the State Government to make the people aware about the preventive measures to be adopted during heat wave conditions. The concerned Departments have taken/been suitably instructed to take the following steps:—

(i) Education Department to reschedule the programme of examinations of students and complete it by 30th April, 1999.

(ii) Labour and Employment Department to reschedule the working hours of labourers to avoid exposure to direct Sun from 12 noon to 4 P.M.

(iii) Health Department has taken steps to keep sufficient ice, saline and other life saving medicines in all hospitals for treatment of sunstroke patients.

(iv) Preventive actions to be taken by people during heat wave conditions has been publicised through Newspapers, Doordarshan, All India Radio to make the people aware and take preventive actions.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has no proposal to treat heat wave deaths as a natural calamity since the same can be prevented by adopting proper preventive measures.